



# The Human Touch

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August 2000

TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE



## *From Robin's Pen*

### **Try Working With Whole Family**

I have just about completed my visits with DHS staff throughout the state. I will be visiting the State Hospital and Developmental Center as well as a few more Youth Corrections locations in the near future and that will wind up what has been a tremendous opportunity for me to meet with staff and hear your successes and your frustrations firsthand. I also just returned from an annual meeting with my colleagues from across the country. Once a year we meet to share what we are doing and struggling with.

One of the common themes from my state visits and this national meeting was a consensus that efforts to work more closely and extensively with families touched by the child welfare system are effective in protecting children and in moving them to permanency either through re-unification or adoption more expeditiously.

In Utah, we refer to this practice as Family Conferencing or Family Unity Meetings. In other states, it is known by various labels. Regardless of what label a state chooses to attach, the practice allows parents, their extended families and trusted friends to lay out a plan for their children's futures. Our Division of Child and Family Services targets the program toward families who desire to

participate in safety and permanency planning for their children. It isn't right for all families and is not used if criminal charges are pending.

The program focuses on each family's strengths rather than looking only at the challenges they face. Under a more traditional approach, relatives of a family experiencing trouble may have felt left out and caseworkers may have hesitated to include them due to the confidential nature of cases. Family Conferencing allows and encourages the involvement of aunts, uncles, grandparents, and cousins, other relatives and friends who know the family well and who are committed to assisting.

The "family" meets with a social worker who outlines the concerns and then asks family members to lay out a plan that will ensure the child's safety and get mom and/or dad back on track. The social worker then allows the family to work it out.

Among the champions of Family Conferencing in DCFS are Shirley Sutton and Lani Taholo. During my visits, both Shirley and Lani took time to update me on the benefits of this practice. "It provides a safe place for the family, extended family and community to talk about safety and permanency for children" in the words of Lani.

The Division of Child and Family Services has used family conferences to place children in family foster homes in all regions. Dr. Elaine Walton and Dr. Jini Roby from Brigham Young University's School of Social Work are evaluating the practice so we can even more effectively identify families where this approach is appropriate and will produce positive outcomes for children.

This is just one of many innovative strategies our employees are using to deliver quality services. On my visits I saw and heard about many; I will highlight more of them in upcoming articles. As I have stated in my visits, "the citizens of this state are well served by our Department" and each of you is the key.

# Girls Learn Skills, Work Off Fines at Strawberry

By Carol Sisco, DHS Public Information

Take 11 girls who've broken the law and have fines to pay, give them work boots and hard hats and put them to work building fences and digging ditches. Three months later they've worked off 1,430 hours of restitution and learned a whole lot more than just building fences.

The Strawberry Work Program is operated through the Division of Youth Corrections' Lightning Peak program in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service. Now in its fifth season at Strawberry Reservoir, the program started as a boys' work camp. Two years later it became the state's first work camp for girls.

"Girls never had the chance guys did to work off restitution and perform community service hours," said DYC Region 3 Director Kit Enniss. "All the Forest Service projects were typically male oriented. Now the females are doing more work than most males in that kind of setting."

Overall, boys and girls have worked off 12,730 hours during the past five years.

When you're lifting a 300-pound boulder from a trench, you learn a lot about teamwork. That same teamwork is needed to build fence. The physical labor is hard, but lush scenery and wildlife surround you.

"I'm staying out of trouble, paying off my fine and getting out of the system," said one girl who had stolen a car. Other offenses range from truancy to theft.

All the girls, ages 14 to 17, are bused to Strawberry daily from Utah County this year. The program initially operated as an overnight work camp and will start doing that again next year when new housing is completed.

"They learned life skills like decision-making and better communication skills during the overnight camp in previous years," said Counselor Andrea Eggertsen.

"You feel like you accomplish something here," added counselor Troy Stoddard. "That's huge for these girls to build that fence and reach some goals.



## Strawberry workers

I'm really proud of what they've done."

The Forest Service is adamant about retaining the camp because the girls work so hard, project coordinator Noela Karza said.

"They put in an honest 40 hours," Stoddard said. It's hard work. They learn a work ethic. Regular work crews don't put in as much time or do such hard physical labor."

## Seniors Give Monroe Mountain Firefighters Water, Supplies

Senior Citizens in the Six-County Area on Aging couldn't help fight forest fires this summer, but they donated water and supplies to firefighters on Monroe Mountain in Sevier County.

Seniors at the Richfield Senior Center collected \$111 in one afternoon and bought bottled water, according to Judy Christensen at the Six-County Area Agency on Aging. Seniors at the South Sevier Senior Center donated funds in addition to contacting two markets and a grocery store for help. They donated 25 cases of drinks and water.

The Sevier County Sheriffs office distributed supplies to volunteers and firefighters. The need was identified during an Aug. 1 Community Providers Assistance Council meeting.

## Blake Chard Named Youth Corrections Director



**Blake Chard**

Blake D. Chard, who has 20 years of experience in state, federal and local government operations, was named Utah Division of Youth Corrections Director. He started work Aug. 28.

Chard was selected by Human Services Director Robin Arnold-Williams Aug. 16 to replace Gary Dalton who retired. The Youth Corrections Board unanimously concurred in his appointment.

Chard was a Utah State Representative for 7.5 years, serving as co-chairman of the Executive Offices, Criminal Justice and Legislature Appropriations Subcommittee that appropriates funds for the Division of Youth Corrections.

"Blake understands the challenges and opportunities which the division faces and will bring strong leadership in meeting them," Arnold-Williams said in making the appointment. "The department looks forward to having him join our leadership team."

A Layton resident, Chard was vice president at SmartUTAH Inc., a non-profit foundation that promotes Internet use to provide government services, encourage electronic commerce and increase citizen participation. He also has more than 12 years experience in computer support, database administration and data analysis for a major aerospace company.

"I plan to continue in the direction that Gary Dalton started in moving toward the restorative justice program" which helps youth make amends to their victims while protecting the public, Chard said. "I also plan an evaluation of current programs to see what the effectiveness level is."

During his legislative term, Chard sponsored and voted on legislation establishing state policy with respect to juvenile justice. He served on the appropriations subcommittee that provides funds for detention and secure care facilities, juvenile

receiving centers and out-of-state placements. He also was instrumental in implementing new technology used by the Utah Legislature.

Chard has a master of public administration degree from Brigham Young University and a bachelor of science in police science from Weber State College.

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## APPA Honors Gini Highfield

Gini Highfield received the American Probation and Parole Association's (APPA) 2000 Member of the Year Award at the association's 25<sup>th</sup> annual training institute in Phoenix. Highfield, a Division of Youth Corrections assistant director, has worked in Utah's juvenile justice system for 30 years.



**Gini Highfield**

Highfield has worked in various capacities at Youth Corrections, including state training director and assistant director. She also worked as a probation officer and a probation unit supervisor with the Utah State Juvenile Court.

She received her bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Utah in 1970 and her master's degree in social work from the same university in 1981.

Highfield has been an APPA member for 17 years, serving as juvenile justice track chair for eight national training institutes, local program chair for the 1987 APPA Annual Training Institute in Salt Lake City and on the juvenile justice and prevention subcommittees since their inception.

Highfield also chaired APPA's advisory committee which consulted on initial development of the Drug Recognition Training for Juvenile Justice Practitioners. She represented APPA on the national advisory committee for the Janiculum Project sponsored by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges in 1997. This committee assisted in the organization of a national symposium and the publication of recommendations, "The Janiculum Project:

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**Jean Nielsen congratulates new Youth Corrections Academy graduates**

## New Graduates Staff Mill Creek Expansion

OGDEN - Many graduates at the August Youth Corrections Academy will work at Mill Creek Youth Center which is expanding from its original 30 beds to 102. It should be fully staffed and open by early fall.

Employees have increased from about 43 to 113 to staff the secure facility located in Ogden.

Mill Creek was built in 1983 to house 30 young offenders. It grew to 42 beds eight years ago when double bunking occurred due to an executive order, according to Region 1 Director Cecil Robinson.

### Highfield . . .

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Reviewing the Past and looking Toward the Future of the Juvenile Court.”

Highfield also assisted in several APPA initiatives to develop juvenile justice training curriculum. She has been a Utah Correctional Association member since 1979 and is a past president. Highfield is UCA’s affiliate representative on APPA’s Board of Directors

The member of the year award recognizes the work and energy of an APPA member. It is open to current members who have provided significant contributions to the organization by promoting APPA’s vision and mission.

Jean Nielsen, who filled in as Youth Corrections Director between Gary Dalton’s retirement and the appointment of Blake Chard, addressed graduates.

“I’ve worked for the Department 30 years and I’ve loved it,” Nielsen said. “We have programs that work and I know we can help people.”

Nielsen also offered five tips for surviving in government:

- Enjoy your colleagues.
- Work hard.
- Have fun.
- Make change within the system.
- Remember the client.

“No matter what you do, remember it’s the client,” she concluded. “Look for people who care about our clients, people who like our clients.”

### ***Dollars & Sense:*** **Check for Tax Exemption**

Tina Puckett from the Division of Aging and Adult Services submitted the following money-saving idea to the Human Touch.

Puckett found the state of Utah was being charged tax for VoiceStream services and products despite the state’s tax-exempt status.

After contacting the company, Puckett received a new statement reflecting the tax-exempt status and issuing a credit of \$120. She discovered savings could really mount up department-wide after reviewing statements from several other divisions.

The Office of Technology was paying about \$13 monthly in taxes, adding up to \$156 a year. The Office of Financial Operations was paying about \$6 a month.

Overall department savings could be quite substantial. Using an average tax of \$156 per year for each of seven divisions and four main offices, Puckett determined DHS could save about \$1,716 yearly.

Congratulations to Tina Puckett who will receive a \$100 incentive for this Dollars & Sense idea.



**Chris Burke hugs fellow band member John deMasi, at left, at the Quality of Life Conference. Visiting at the conference are, from left to right, Kim Peek, Burke, Kim's dad Fran Peek and Division of Services for People with Disabilities Director Sue Geary**

## **‘Corky’ Tells People with Disabilities to Follow Their Dreams**

**By Sharon Yearsley**

**Services for People with Disabilities**

“Chris Burke was awesome,” said Consumer Advisory Council Chairman Greg Beecher. “He’s just like me and he followed his dreams.” Burke and his band entertained more than 550 people at the Quality of Life Conference for people with disabilities at the Provo Marriott Aug. 11. Burke, the keynote speaker, is an actor who has Down syndrome and starred as Corky in ABC’s *Life Goes On*.

Kim Peek, inspiration for the Oscar winning film “Rain Man,” was the featured speaker Saturday. Peek, a savant with extraordinary mental abilities astounded the audience as he answered every question asked.

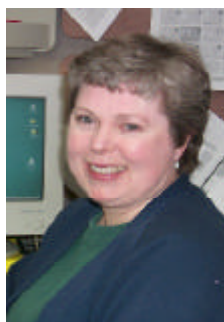
Both men are role models for people with developmental disabilities. Their messages were to recognize and respect the differences in others, focus on your abilities and follow your dreams.

## **Check Your Margins**

**Tech Tip By Janice DeVore**

If you are working on documents that contain newspaper columns, graphics, different margin settings, you can use the display text boundaries feature to know where the document area ends and the margins begin.

To display text boundaries, you must first be in the Page Layout view. Click on **View, Page Layout** (or



Print Layout in Word 2000). Then select **Tools, Options** from the menu bar, and then click on the **View** tab.

In the Page Layout view options area (Print And Web Layout Options area in Word 2000), click on the checkbox for Text boundaries, and then click **OK**.

Now you’ll see dotted lines indicating document margins and text columns, as well as inserted objects.

## Substance Abuse . . .

# Fall Conference Set in St. George

By **B. J. VanRoosendaal, Substance Abuse**

**T**opics ranging from “Your Kid May Have a Secret About Meth” to “Internet Predators” will be featured at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fall Conference on Substance Abuse at the Dixie Center in St. George Sept. 27 through 29.

The broad-range of topics is designed to appeal to many audiences in addition to substance abuse treatment and prevention professionals. Others who may attend include individuals in the criminal justice field, educators, school counselors, local political leaders and anyone needing to improve their understanding or expertise around substance abuse issues.

The conference, an autumn tradition for many professionals, will be in a new Southern Utah setting this year. In the past it was usually held in Park City or somewhere on the Wasatch Front. It is a chance for substance abuse professionals and others to pause and reflect on the past year, and be re-energized by new information presented by the various speakers, presenters and presentations.

Sessions start at 8:30 a.m. each day and run through 4:15 on Wednesday and Thursday and until Noon on Friday.

The featured keynote speaker at the opening session Wednesday the 27<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. is Dr. Alan I. Leshner who was appointed Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) in February of 1994. As one of the scientific institutes of the U.S. National Institutes of Health, NIDA supports more than 85 percent of the world’s research on the health aspects of drug abuse and addiction. Dr. Leshner’s keynote topic is “Taking Off the Blinders: Reality Bites!”

Also, keynoting on Thursday the 28<sup>th</sup> at noon is Dr. David Mee-Lee. He was affiliated with Harvard Medical School from 1976 to 1999 and most recently was a clinical instructor and consultant in psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital. His presentation is designed to inform participants about the underlying concepts of patient

placement criteria.

All conference presentations are divided into four main areas or “tracks.” They include Administrative, Justice, Treatment and Prevention. Titles of this year’s presentations are widely varied and include everything from “Your Kid May Have a Secret About Meth” to “Internet Predators” featured on the Justice Track. Topics such as “Growing Up Strong,” “Living Skills” and “Adolescent Behavior (Normal vs. Drug-Affected)” are featured on the Prevention Track. Some topics on the Treatment Track are “The Overdose Epidemic in Utah: Epidemiology, Prevention and Education,” “Listening Skills for Counselors,” “Fear: An Opportunity for Growth” and “Getting Older: It Can Drive You to Drink.”

Since this year’s Conference is in St. George, all Human Services employees in the area are encouraged to participate if they are interested. Information and registration materials are available on the Utah Division of Substance Abuse Website at: [www.utahdsa.com](http://www.utahdsa.com) or by calling the Division at (801) 538-3939 to have materials mailed.

The Conference is sponsored by the Division of Substance Abuse, the Board of Substance Abuse, Utah Behavioral Healthcare Network (UBHN), State Office of Education, and Utah Substance Abuse and Anti-Violence Coordinating Council.

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